

Washington County, Minnesota

Board of Commissioners - Actions

Actions at the Tuesday, November 1, 2011 Board Meeting

This page is a brief view of the actions taken by the Washington County Board of Commissioners. For further information, please telephone 651-430-6001.

Washington County's mission is to provide quality public services in a cost-effective manner through innovation, leadership, and the cooperation of dedicated people.

Burbank named to Community Development Block Grant advisory committee

John Burbank, Cottage Grove, was named to the Washington County Community Development Block Grant Citizens Advisory Committee by the Washington County Board of Commissioners Nov. 1.

He will serve a term that will expire Dec. 31, 2013. His appointment was recommended by Commissioner Autumn Lehrke, District 4.

The Washington County Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Citizen Advisory Committee is established to provide public input to and increase accountability of the CDBG and HOME programs in Washington County. The purpose of the CDBG program is to develop strong urban communities by providing decent housing and a suitable living environment, and expanding economic opportunities, principally for low- and moderate-income persons.

The HOME program was created by the National Affordable Housing Act of 1990 and is the largest federal block grant available to communities to create affordable housing. The intent of the program is to increase the supply of decent affordable housing to low- and very low-income households; strengthen the ability of state and local governments to provide housing; and leverage non-federal sources of funds for affordable housing.

The CDBG Citizen Advisory Committee consists of 11 voting members appointed by the County Board and two ex-officio members.

County comments on City of Lakeland tax increment financing district

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved comments Nov. 1 on the City of Lakeland's proposal to establish a redevelopment tax increment financing (TIF) district in the city.

The tax increment financing district is to assist in the acquisition and renovation of an existing commercial building for a corporate headquarters.

Commercial Management, LLC, a full-service property management company now in Bayport, has acquired and proposes to renovate an existing commercial building at 84 St. Croix Trail S. for use as its corporate headquarters. The project will result in six jobs operating in the renovated facility.

TIF uses the additional property taxes paid as a result of development in the district to pay for part of the development costs. When a new building is constructed or renovated, the market value of the property and its property taxes typically rise, because the improvements add value to the parcel. Taxing districts that would usually benefit from the rising market value, such as the county, forego the increased property taxes for a set amount of time, and so much approve of the TIF process.

Senior living home in Oak Park Heights contracted to provide services to seniors

Oak Park Heights Senior Living in Oak Park Heights may provide services to individuals receiving Medical Assistance Home and Community Based Services, after the Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a contract with the facility Nov. 1.

State statute requires counties to take the responsibility of issuing, managing, and monitoring contracts to providers of Home and Community Based Services through Medical Assistance (MA) Waivers.

Oak Park Senior Living is a new facility in Oak Park Heights with 120 units. The facility provides 24-hour Customized Living (commonly known as assisted living) to both private-pay clients and clients eligible for Home and Community Based Services through MA waivers. The company that owns this site operates other sites in Dakota and Hennepin counties.

Twenty-four-hour Customized Living is a service designed for persons in need of regular supervision and assistance with daily activities such as medication administration, personal care, and housekeeping. These individuals are assessed by county staff and are determined not to need the level of care provided in a skilled nursing home, but are unable to remain safely in their own homes. Each client receives individualized services based on level of need. The provider's rate is determined based on this individualized assessment and is billed directly to MA through the Elderly Waiver Program. The facility intends to serve more than 20 waiver clients, who will pay a reduced rate rent.

The provider will complete an annual program evaluation describing any incident or maltreatment reports and outlining how its services have helped delay the onset of institutional, i.e., nursing home, placement.

Public health department will apply for funds to help with accreditation

The Washington County Public Health and Environment Department will apply for funds from the National Association of City and County Health Officials (NACCHO) to help with the department's national accreditation process. The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved the application Nov. 1.

With funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, NACCHO will fund a limited number of local health departments nationwide to support their preparation work for national accreditation. The goal of the national accreditation program is to improve and protect the health of the public by advancing the quality and performance of health departments across the country.

Funds can be used to address any performance standard that a department does not meet. The department's application is requesting a grant for \$10,000 with a \$3,000 in-kind contribution of existing funding, to be used between Nov. 15, 2011 through May 31, 2012.

The Washington County department completed an extensive self-assessment of its performance of the national standards in October 2011. A significant deficit was identified in long-term organizational strategic planning. The department does not have a three- to five-year strategic plan in place that sets its future direction of priorities and resource needs. If the department is awarded this grant, the money will be used to cover staff expenses related to time spent on a strategic planning process and to contract with a consultant to facilitate the process.

Pedestrian overpass construction will include stormwater management

The Washington County Board of Commissioners and the Rice Creek Watershed District now have in place a maintenance agreement that outlines a stormwater management best practices plan for the construction of the Hardwood Creek Regional Trail pedestrian overpass of County Road 83 in Forest Lake.

The County Board agreed to the plan at its meeting Nov. 1. State statute requires a stormwater management plan for the construction.

The terms of the watershed district's permit issuance require an executed maintenance agreement for stormwater Best Management Practices. The best practices will be installed during the construction of the Hardwood Creek Regional Trail Pedestrian Overpass of County Road 83 Project in Forest Lake.

Washington County Sheriff's Office, Hudson Police Department have agreement

Sworn officers from the Washington County Sheriff's Office and the City of Hudson, Wis., Police Department will be able to extend their services into each other's respective jurisdictions for the purpose of providing assistance in emergency situations and to enforce laws of their respective states.

The Washington County Board of Commissioners agreed Nov. 1 to the mutual aid joint powers agreement that would allow for the peace officers to work in each other's jurisdictions.

This Joint Powers Agreement will grant the City of Hudson Police Department peace officers the authority, when requested, to act with all the arrest and peace officer authority of an officer of the Washington County Sheriff's Office while within the boundaries of the City of Stillwater. Washington County Sheriff's deputies will have the same authority while in the City of Hudson, Wis. Such joint powers agreements are allowed by the laws of both states.

Department of Corrections will license space to put antennas, equipment on Government Center

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved an agreement with the Minnesota Department of Corrections Nov. 1 to license space to mount antennas and equipment on the Government Center and Law Enforcement Center buildings in Stillwater for its 800 MHz network.

These antennas and installed equipment will be used to operate the 800 MHz network which will allow the Department of Corrections to communicate with other network users.

This license would not require expenditures by Washington County and the revenue of \$6,600 per year will support the operation of the county's 800 MHz public safety radio system.

Board reviews watershed districts' budgets

The Washington County Board of Commissioners reviewed budgets and projects for water management organizations (WMOs) that have jurisdiction in Washington County at a workshop Nov. 1.

Brown's Creek, Carnelian-Marine-St. Croix, Comfort Lake-Forest Lake, Middle St. Croix, Ramsey-Washington, Rice Creek, South Washington and Valley Branch WMOs all have jurisdiction in Washington County.

Board members reviewed the budgets from each WMO, and saw highlights of major projects being undertaken by the WMOs. It also reviewed the budget and projects for the Washington Conservation District, which oversees conservation projects throughout the county.
